



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

OUR SOCIAL AND ETHICAL SOLIDARITY.

SOCIETY is now generally conceived as an organism. This conception has come to include not only the ordered externalities of social life, but also the vital interdependence of the individuals constituting the social community.

The proof of the organic solidarity of the divers components that make up society is here based on more or less salient points of analogy obtaining between the social fabric and the vital structure of the living individuals composing it. On the strength of it society is declared to consist of interdependently functioning units, in essentially the same manner as an animal is seen to consist of interdependently functioning integrant units of texture.

It is true our mere living together, in mutual dependence on one another's divers social functions, suggests of itself the conception of organization. And in this sense Aristotle already looked upon man as a born *ξῶον πολιτικόν*, as constitutionally a member of a body politic, much in the same way as ants, bees, and other animals are constitutionally of a social nature.

Other philosophers, however, have, on the contrary, firmly believed that man lived originally in a state of nature in which no social community existed,—a social compact having been subsequently entered into by conscious agreement between the individuals taking part in it. And who can tell whether primitive man may not have roamed the forests singly or in pairs like other wild animals.

Now it is by no means a matter of indifference to human welfare what kind of idea prevails among us regarding the nature of the bond which links us socially together. To become convinced of the practical importance of current conceptions of society, we need only remember what eminently effective parts the theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau have actually played in modern history.

Indeed, the puzzle where the constitutional limits of sepa-

rate individuality end, and where those of collective sociality begin, has perplexed not only biologists in their peaceful pursuits, but has involved mankind at large in interminable fratricidal contentions.

Social organizations, such as church and state, have conjointly or separately struggled to be recognized as the veritable body of which human individuals are mere subordinate members; in which they were indeed expected wholly to merge their individual being. Against such sweeping pretension the enrolled individuals have from time to time risen to assert their personal autonomy. Of such individualistic revolt puritanism and democracy are conspicuous examples.

In our own day the divers and often seriously clashing claims of individualism and socialism are pressing more urgently than ever for rational consideration. It is, therefore, not irrelevant to inquire whether the prevalent conception of society being an organism can help us effectively to harmonize those seemingly antagonistic claims.

When at present society is declared to be an organism, it is not meant that the individuals composing it have consciously organized it; nor merely that they are by nature destined to live in social communion. It is meant that we human beings by force of our ingrained constitution form of necessity part of an integral social structure in essentially the same manner as the sundry organs of a living being, or its sundry structural units form part of an integral vital structure.

This out-and-out organic interpretation of society is evidently pregnant with momentous practical implications. Before actually adopting it for practical guidance, it behooves us, therefore, to make sure that it is true to nature, that the theoretical conception corresponds to reality.

It amounts here to no radical difference whether the analogy drawn between the organic interdependence of human beings in society and the interdependence of the parts in the vital organism be considered as obtaining in the sphere of pure intelligence, as stoutly maintained by idealists, or whether it be considered to obtain primordially in the sense-revealed constitution of the human organism and its social medium, as

insisted upon by naturalists. In both cases the conception is based on our experience of the only organic structure we have directly knowledge of, and this is the perceptible body of organic beings.

In order to establish a correct analogy between the vital and the social organism, we have consequently first to ascertain by what means the sundry organs or the sundry ultimate units come to form integrant parts of the organism as a whole, and how they come to exercise their divers functions in co-operative subserviency to its needs as an integral being. Without this positive information we are hardly in a position to use the analogy in elucidation of the true nature of society, much less to employ it for the practical purpose of shaping social institution in agreement with it.

It does here nowise suffice to shift the analogy to be established into the barren realm of formal logic, where the relation of constituent parts to a conceptual whole can in a general way be deductively determined. Nor does it suffice to assume outright that, as the organism is an indiscerptible totality whose constituent parts receive their significance solely from their relation to the whole, so in the same manner has society to be regarded as an indiscerptible totality whose constituent units receive their significance solely from their relation to the whole. It would be no less futile to attempt to deduce logically from the formal relation of parts to a whole the actual relation of individuals to society than it would be to attempt to deduce in the same way the relation of the liver or the brain to the organism of which they form part. And, on the other hand, it seems rather questionable whether a cook or a lawgiver can rightly be said to be related to society in essentially the same way as the liver or the brain are related to the organism. A cook or a lawgiver do obviously not exist exclusively as means towards an end to be attained outside themselves, as is actually the case with the liver and the brain.

Human beings form constituent units of society, not merely by force of the interdependency of their divers external functions, but also, and more radically still, by force of their mental

interdependence. It is, in fact, exclusively through such mental interdependence, through such innate dependence of humanly organized minds upon one another for their very existence as such, and for the possible efficiency of their function; it is through this mutual dependency of their minds upon one another that men are social and ethical beings. Without it man would be a soulless, thoughtless, irresponsible animal, and human society and its ethical bearings non-existent.

Here, in our search after the true foundation of social and ethical solidarity, we are confronted by the much-vexed yet still open problem, how different units come to be constitutionally destined to enter into interdependent relations so as aimfully to form an organically efficient whole. How, in our case, a separate human individual comes to be so constituted as to form a complemental part in the composition of the larger whole called society. This consideration of innate reciprocal dependence in the constitution of a larger whole involves the entire teleological riddle, the puzzle,—namely, how the integral constitution of a whole, eventually to be formed, can possibly act as a so-called final cause, act as the chief determining cause of the nature, disposition, and function of the constituent units that enter into its formation.

Kant sought to argue away teleology in nature by declaring it to be a peculiar mode of our conception of a certain order of things. He held that every occurrence in nature being strictly dependent on immediate or so-called efficient causation, final causation could not possibly enter into the system of nature. And recently, much in the way of Empedocles of old, natural selection has been believed more particularly to reduce all seeming teleology in organic nature to mechanical or, at least, to efficient causation. In fact, the principal aim of our present scientific interpretation of nature is to attribute all its occurrences to adequate mechanical causation.

Natural science, when it interprets organization as resulting thus simply from a peculiar rearrangement of so many pre-existing material units moved by so much pre-existing energy,

misses in its explanation all that is most essential to an adequate understanding of the case. To be told that we consist of nothing but a peculiar rearrangement of so many indestructible atoms of C, O, H, and N, moved by so many units of indestructible energy, is hardly more in keeping with the real state of things than to be told that we consist of nothing but such utterly evanescent stuff as consciousness is made of. The fact here overlooked, the essential fact, is that in the process of organic development new modes of aimful energy, manifest in specific modes of vital reaction of the organism in relation to its medium, come creatively into existence. All that is most characteristic of vital organization and its activity, all that constitutes its specific nature, merges thus newly produced into being, resulting from potencies not previously realized. This amounts not altogether to a creation out of nothing; but it is a coming into existence of efficiencies previously non-existent.

It is evident that—explain it as we may—a living being in relation to its organic and inorganic environment is found to be out and out teleologically developed. Its organization is preconcentedly constituted for life in a specific medium. And the development of an organism from a reproductive germ is obviously teleologically predetermined by the nature of the organism to be developed therefrom. The exact plan of the whole being, eventually to be formed as a product of nature, enters here somehow as a final cause in its reproduction.

The question now is, how far society can in the same sense be said to be the final cause of its own organization. We have to find out how far the nature of the individuals constituting society and the disposition of its external appurtenances are determined by itself as an integral entity.

It seems certain that groups of human beings, living without mutual contact in different localities, tend to fall into essentially similar organization, mentally and physically. This sameness of social organization, with its all but identical outcomes in culture, is a fact so striking in its broad features and even in its minute details, that it can be only accounted

for by assuming inherent tendencies in human nature necessarily leading to it.

Viewed in this light, the analogy between society and the vital organism would, however, hold good, not as between the organic interdependence of the constituent units of society and that of the constituent elements of the organism, but between the gradual development of social life and the phyletic development of living beings in relation to their environment. The so-called growth of society can therefore not rightly be compared to the growth of an individual organism, but only to the development of vital organization in the course of phyletic evolution.

This, however, is not what is generally meant when society is said to be an organism. It is then meant that society is constituted by individual men falling conjointly into the formation of a definite "superorganic" structure in essentially the same way as the individual elements of our body fall conjointly into the formation of its organic structure.

This altogether fatalistic and automatic interpretation of the organization of society was rendered doubly plausible when the leading analogy had been reversed by biologists. This time it was the established state or social community which in its turn had to serve as prototype in the attempt analogically to illustrate the nature of vital organization. The living organism was now declared to be in all verity a social community, in which a vast number of autonomous individuals, the so-called cells, are dividing among themselves the divers functions that have to be performed in order to keep the organism as a whole in efficient trim.

Under this aspect the teleological riddle grew more perplexing than ever. For it remained utterly incomprehensible how a vast assemblage of divers autonomous beings, wholly devoid of perception and conception, could possibly range themselves in perfect preconcerted order, so as faithfully to reproduce together the highly complex unitary organization of a definite prototype, and then minister diversely and yet conjointly to its needs as an indiscernible being.

This view, amounting to a miraculous consensus of uncon-

scious agents, was nevertheless almost inevitably forced upon investigators, when under the microscope the complex organism was seen to be composed of seemingly independent cell-beings, and was observed to be developed from a germ-cell through its multiplication by means of cumulative self-division. However incomprehensible the fact, and indeed ludicrous the idea, that highly organized beings,—our own unitary being with all its exalted faculties among the rest,—that these high-wrought lives were after all only automatically constituted assemblages of myriads of all but senseless elementary animalcules ; however personally degrading ; this eminently mystical view came by force of seemingly correct observation to be, nevertheless, the established doctrine concerning vital organization.

Lately, however, the complete organic equipment of so-called unicellular beings, together with the discovery that the protoplasm, the living substance, of plants and animals, forms in reality a continuous substratum of life ; these significant experiences have effectively disproved the theory that the complex organism consists of elementary autonomous constituents, and have led to the far more satisfactory conclusion that the organism is a unitary being. As Strassburger expresses it : “Dass somit die Pflanze ähnlich wie das Thier einen einheitlichen, lebendigen Organismus bildet.”

Herewith the analogy sought to be established between society and its constituent human units on the one side and the organism and its constituent cell-units on the other side, breaks completely down and may be definitely dismissed.

Vital organization is not brought about like social organization through the consensus of autonomous units. It is wrought within a unitary being, whose organic differentiations and specifications were gradually elaborated through interaction with the medium. The end of vital organization is realized in the co-operative efficiency of its constituents parts in total subserviency to the organism as an integral being, whilst the true end of social organization among us human beings is realized in the social consciousness of each constituent individual.

As regards the social solidarity of lower animals, it would seem hardly more dependent on the social consciousness of the constituent individuals, than the begetting of their offspring and the elaborately aimful provisions for its future welfare. Here preservation of the individual and the race appears to be the only concern of social as well as of individual life.

In this connection it may be plausibly asserted that social faculties, though manifest as conscious states, are in fact developed through vital interaction with the medium in which man finds himself cast, just as organic structure is developed through vital interaction with a given medium; and that, consequently, social as well as vital development are, after all, merely effects of efficient causation into which no final causation, no preconcerted organic plan, nor volitional direction on our part, enter as determining factors. Under this aspect, a power, not ourselves, and outside the organism, seems to be shaping social and ethical development.

We are thus brought face to face with the inmost mystery of teleology, from which with inevitable philosophical insistence all prototypal and archetypal world conceptions emanate, such as Platonism, Hegelianism, and their innumerable modifications.

It is, at least, clear that in so-called evolution, phyletic and social, no such pre-existing structural prototype is giving direction to their formative tendencies, as is found to be the case with regard to the formative tendencies of the reproductive germ of an organism. Notwithstanding the current contention as to the priority of the hen or the egg, it is certain that the pre-established structure of the hen enters somehow as the principal determining factor in the development of the egg into a chicken. The egg derives its definite formative tendencies from the fully-developed organism of which it has formed part, and in this way the structural plan of the pre-existing organism acts as final cause in the development of its reproductive germ.

Nothing remotely resembling this absolute dependence on what is to be developed upon what has already been devel-

oped takes place in phyletic and social evolution. Here something is, as it were, tentatively striving to be developed which has no pre-existing prototype from which it derives its formative tendencies.

This fact of creative new-becoming, belonging so completely to a different order from that of mere reproduction, has to be well borne in mind if we desire to arrive at correct conclusions concerning development in general. No profounder, no more essential distinction can be found in the entire compass of nature. Progressive organic development, bringing social development along with it, has to be regarded as an actual realization of a higher mode of being by means of formative tendencies, which are not merely reproducing something already realized, but that lie latent and unfulfilled in whatever it may be which is constituting and energizing the perceptible world. Somehow there must potentially dwell in the primordial world material, if that which eventually comes to affect our senses may so be called; there must dwell in it a capacity of developing under the toilsome stress of interaction into higher and higher modes of being.

In contemplating the fact of actual new formation or aimful creative development, it lies near to transcend altogether the sphere of physical causation, efficient and final. Some directing efficiency of a hyper-physical kind seems here planfully to force the given world-material into definite, higher combinations, evidenced by higher modes of activity. To account for this teleological elaboration, the usual recourse is to seek to establish an analogy between our own intelligent formation and volitional execution of plans and a similar though far more exalted activity on the part of a supreme Intelligence. The apparently unconscious teleological construction of the objects constituting the perceptible universe is then held to be effected in conformity with a pre-existing plan in the mind of a supreme Artificer. Or, as extreme idealists will have it, our own imperfect striving after totality of comprehension, giving rise to the illusive time-and-space world of sense apparitions, has its pre-existing archetype in the eternal totality of universal Intelligence in which all existence is teleologically

unified. Whether our intelligent comprehension of creation can, however, rightly be said to have any affinity with the activity of an intelligence, by force of whose potency creation is actually realized, depends upon the validity of the analogy between our merely reproductively apprehending intelligence and a productively creating potency.

The immediate question before us is, Have we legitimate reason to conclude, by force of analogy with our own doings, that a preconcerted plan in the mind of a supreme Artificer is being volitionally executed in vital and social development? Are vital and social development the result of design on the part of a supreme Intelligence?

Let us examine with unbiased scrutiny what actual resemblance there can be traced between the relation of our mental plans to their structural realization on the one hand and the agencies actually operative in vital and social development on the other. Here we have to be careful not to allow our reasoning to be entangled in a "vicious circle." With Kant we have to admit that we cannot legitimately use the analogy between our aimful execution of plans and the aimful construction of natural products to prove the existence of a supreme Artificer, and then, *vice versa*, assume the existence of a supreme Artificer in order to explain the aimful construction of natural products.*

Analogical reasoning has to proceed from what is directly known to what is to be explained thereby. Now, can there rightly be said to exist the remotest likeness between the action of our intelligence and volition upon our natural surroundings and the constructive agencies operative in their actual production?

It is not difficult to perceive that an impassable gulf is di-

* "When in natural science and its contents there is introduced the concept of Deity to explain design in nature, and such natural design is then again used to prove the existence of a Deity, there is left no true inward consistency in either science." ("Theology and Natural Science.") "This delusive reasoning in a circle brings uncertainty to both by confusing their limits." ("Kritik d. Teleolog. Urtheilskraft," "Von dem Princip der Teleologie als innerem Princip der Naturwissenschaft.")

viding the intelligent and volitional use we make of the agencies we find already operative in the perceptible universe, and the process by which these agencies attain their constructive results. We can, for instance, informed by previous experience, set out with the aim of "producing" water by bringing together oxygen and hydrogen, and sending an electric shock through the mixture. But our intelligence and volition, as mental states, have nothing whatever in common with that which is active in the constructive transformation which in reality takes place. They add no kind of efficiency to the natural agencies, nor are they in any way akin to them. Our intelligence and our volition are, in fact, utterly powerless to impart the least actual efficiency to natural objects. All efficiency manifest in nature is inherent in the perceptible world-material, and cannot be placed in remotest analogy with any kind of mental faculty. Whatever is efficiently underlying actual creation has no sameness of nature with what we know as our intelligence and volition.*

When we construct an edifice, or are said to create a work of art, we utilize in the execution of the mental plan existing substances and their given properties. Everything which imparts actual efficiency to these substances, and enduring reality to the constructed work, is inherent in the perceptible material. Previous experience enables us mentally to forecast arrangements and effects attainable by manipulating the given material in definite ways. In such manipulation machinery may play as effective a part as our own motor organs. Our activity in

* It is altogether on the mistaken ascription of constitutive power to our in reality forceless intelligence that transcendental Idealism is based. In fact, nothing of purely mental consistency has the least constitutive power in nature. Intelligence does nowise constitute nature, neither in Kant's limited sense, nor in Hegel's thoroughgoing version. It merely apprehends symbolically the representative system of nature organically constituted in us during phyletic evolution, and revealed as our mental microcosm in our lapsing moments of conscious awareness. And as our own mentality is utterly powerless to constitute anything in nature, or to affect as such other beings, it stands to reason that an analogically hypostatized mind of whatever highest order must necessarily be just as powerless to constitute anything in nature or to affect other beings. Consequently, transcendental Idealism is a radically mistaken world-conception.

the construction of works of industry or art is, therefore, so far as efficient energy is concerned, a matter of mere mechanical co-operation. Nothing of the nature of mind enters as efficient energy into the process. Mind, as such, furnishes us merely with a representative ideal forecast of the work to be executed. It affords but a forceless inner awareness of what in reality has been, or can 'be, wrought through the forces by which perceptible objects exist and are visibly transformed.

We are beings organized out and out in correlation to our environment; beings endowed with a representative consciousness in which random time-scattered experience becomes systematized and available as memory, enabling us to construct ideal forecasts. Such ideal forecasts are, however, realizable only in measure as they correspond to potentialities immanent in outside nature; potentialities that may become actual through our disposition of the efficiencies involving them.

Our volition, as a coefficient factor in nature, consists solely in the organic power we have of moving at will certain of our organs, those, namely, which bring us into direct relation with the outside world. It is this organic faculty of motor self-determination that enables us to use our representative mental microcosm as guidance in our vital intercourse with the outside world. In order to execute a certain plan, we perform a definite series of voluntary movements in agreement with the representative mental forecast. And we succeed in measure as the forecast has been truly representative of results attainable through efficiencies appertaining to the mentally symbolized reality.

We are conscious of the existence and efficiencies of the extra-mental macrocosm only through the representative mental microcosm which phyletic and individual experience have organized in us. In order to conduct ourselves sanely, judiciously, fruitfully, our mental view has of necessity to correspond to the efficiencies underlying extra-mental reality.

Intelligence and volition, however marvellous their function in the economy of life, are, after all, but vicarious manifesta-

tions. Their conscious play affords but a system of signs symbolic of our relation to a transcendent reality,—a reality whose creative potency is welling beyond all consciousness from the inscrutable source of being and becoming. It is certain, then, that nothing analogous to what we know as our intelligence can possibly be efficient as constitutive energy in vital and social organization. Intelligence can therefore nowise be attributed to the efficiencies that constitute the perceptible world.

Yet it is very evident that these same efficiencies may, for all this, be made to produce effects upon us not belonging to their purely physical activity,—effects that are essentially intellectual. A phonograph sets going mechanically a specially graduated series of vibrations. These have only an infinitesimal mechanical effect on the extra-mental world. To a human hearer they may convey information of exceeding importance. A work of art has for the artistically susceptible an ideal import incommensurably transcending the physical efficiencies which constitute its sense-compelling existence in the outside world. It is clear, then, that if to us human beings sense-aroused perceptions are only vicariously significative of the transcendent extra-mental reality compelling them, it is also true that the sense-compelling efficiencies of the extra-mental world may come to serve us, *vice versa*, as mere signs symbolic of a transcendent mental significance. In fact, human culture is out and out wrought by means of external signs significative of mental affections.

Of these symbolic means of expression and communication linguistic signs are by far the most potent. They are so by being always and everywhere produceable at will, and by being through organic association significative of the sundry constituents of our mental microcosm. So important are they that they constitute the medium through which our thinking is not merely conveyed, but actually realized.

Our intelligence, far from being itself a reality-constituting power, is, in fact, dependent for its very existence and actual condition on embodiment in symbolic signs furnished by the sense-affecting efficiencies of the extra-mental world. Elimi-

nate all extra-mental means of expression and where could our vaunted intelligence be found?

Only by means of physical signs can we intelligently realize and intelligibly express and communicate the imperceptible experiences of our inner life. It is solely through such volitional designation by discriminative signs that we intelligently apperceive the existence, the relations, and the import of the multifarious constituents of our conscious microcosm, as it emanates from its organic matrix.

It is incontestable that the present mental condition of our race has been gradually attained through a process of incessant interaction, carried on by innumerable generations between their organic being and the outside world, including, of course, interaction with kindred beings. Mental organization has indivisibly formed part of the organic elaboration of our entire being. Its special existence is obviously a result of the same process of progressive creation of which our entire organic being is the perceptible outcome.

The real import of this our being, its own worth in the scale of existence, as victoriously established through its vital toil in interaction with the world at large; this cumulated organic wealth has found specialized structural realization in an organ in which all inner efficiencies and outer influences centre and are systematically unified. That which essentially constitutes our personality, and what we know of the outside world, rests organically secured in this central organ. Our self-consciousness, as well as our world-consciousness, is demonstrably an outcome of its activity,—the activity, namely, of that extra-conscious existent which has power through sense-affection to arouse in us the percept we call a brain. It is self-evident, however, that we can form no adequate conception whatever of the real, self-consisting nature of that which thus affects our senses. The aroused percept in us, the brain we perceive, is but a symbolically revealed semblance of the real, power-endowed existent. But through inner and outer experience we know with sufficient certainty that this sense-revealed existent is a gradually developed and marvelously efficient self- and world-manifesting organ.

Our organization is throughout, down to its minutest structural constitution, teleologically complementary to its relations with the outside world: the digestive organs to food, the lungs to air, the organs of locomotion to the ground to be gone over, those of prehension to what has to be grasped, those of attack and defence to prey and enemies, the organs of sense to the diverse sense-affecting influences. And no less is our inner life, consciously manifest as emotion, thought, and volition, complementary to relations organically established between ourselves and the outside world. Of such inner-life-relations, those binding us to our fellow-beings come to gain more and more predominant sway. However ideal such altruistic sentiments may appear, we should never forget that they are grounded in reciprocal organic dependence. The living being, by force of his organization, is essentially a product of progressive generation, which links him organically to other members of his race. The most fundamentally complementary among these self-transcending organic connections with kindred beings is evidently the sexual relation. It involves the perpetuation of the race, rendering possible its phyletic development. Next to it, and in consequence of it, emerges the parental relation, giving rise to the family, the primitive social community.

It is in this actual procreative kinship that our altruistic nature is rooted. These organically complementary relations, primordially established without conscious concurrence, come in the course of vital development to incite more and more intense and significant concomitant emotions in their complementary bearers. And it is the rational realization of the self-transcending significance of these reciprocal emotions which forms the groundwork of our social and ethical consciousness.

By means of outward physical signs, the social emotions, which otherwise would remain unrecognized, find their mutually intelligible expression. This faculty of imparting to other like beings, through the agency of sense-compelling signs, the concerns of our sense-occluded inner life, and, in return, sympathetically to apprehend, by means of similar signs, the concerns of their inner life,—this wondrous faculty

of sympathetic divination is that which constitutes us social beings and enables us to become moral agents.

Ethical consciousness manifests itself normally in a more and more complete and extensive recognition of the essential conaturalness of fellow-beings, as bearers of the same wealth and worth of life we individually are conscious of; in the recognition of what is now significantly called the brotherhood of man.

This altruistic consciousness does not descend to us as a mere ideal inspiration from surmised empyreal heights. It is—it cannot be too often asserted—firmly and perceptibly rooted in organic solidarity; in the flesh-and-blood solidarity not only of those immediately related to us, not only of those who happen at present livingly to embody the inherited wealth of progressive organization, but pre-eminently in the organic solidarity of past, present, and future generations.

It is in all verity the faithful stability of vital organization which, amidst a constant flux of constituent elements, succeeds in preserving all through life what we call our personal identity. And it is this same perpetuating potency which, amidst the constant flux of individuated beings, is preserving with like fidelity from generation to generation the essential identity of human nature. In this light our self-rounded personality appears but a transient embodiment of the victorious attainments of endless vital toil. However personally glorious our human consciousness may be, we are but constituent elements of humanity at large. And it is because of this generically organized, this common vital humanity in us, that our personal consciousness is instinct with hyper-individual, with eternalizing aspirations.

Our individual development from infancy to maturity, from unconscious childhood to conscious membership in a social and ethical order of existence, epitomizes human progress in the past, and significantly points to higher and higher achievement in the future. The inheritance by each of us of all the laboriously acquired organic wealth and worth of human nature constitutes us bearers of a transcendent possession only provisionally intrusted to us for safe-keeping; and, further-

more, in compliance with the bent of progressive realization, intrusted to us for enhanced transmission to posterity.

Being thus constitutionally appointed to the stewardship of life, on whose faithful administration all human worth and progress are vitally, immanently dependent; from this organically assigned mission flows rationally our moral responsibility, our imperative ethical duty, the mysterious moral "ought," the solemn super-individual injunction.

Failure to comply with the creative bent of the ethical demand, self-willed squandering of the inherited gifts of life, leads relentlessly, speedily, to degradation and deterioration. And mere relinquishment of progressive aspirations is sure before long to be followed by stagnation into rigid grooves of all but instinctive animality.

To sum up: Social and ethical solidarity rest fundamentally on vital organization. Like all other vital development, progress of their existing condition is wrought by toilsomely acquired increments of organic elaboration. And this is effected through interaction of the individual with his social medium. It is in this laborious way that the increasingly reciprocal relations which constitute the growing solidarity of social and ethical sentiments become in us human individuals more and more fully organized. And they make themselves felt as organically realized in our social and ethical consciousness, when they urge to conduct in agreement with the organized propensities. What is commonly called character consists essentially in such structurally established propensities. And it is because of this structural consolidation and fixation that individual character is so insistent and persistent. Education, with its elaborate appurtenances, accomplishes its aim solely by modifying organic structure, so that it may potentially embody its teachings.

Without pre-established vital structure, in which mental potentialities inhere, consciousness of whatever kind is non-existent. Whatever is not actually organized in the visible structure of the living human being has, so far as he himself is concerned, no sort of reality. A person is color-blind because a specific region of his organic structure has remained

undeveloped, failing thereby appropriately to react on the stimulating influences that normally arouse color-sensations. It is not otherwise with the morally obtuse, the morally idiotic. They are devoid of ethical consciousness simply because ethical propensities have failed to become organized in their brain. And for no other cause are animals deprived of moral consciousness. If we all happened to be thus deficient in cerebral organization, surely morality among us would be altogether non-existent.

Yet, though vital organization can be proved to be the indispensable substratum of all consciousness, and with it of all actual social and ethical realization, we have no slightest clew as how it comes so to be. The mystery of being and becoming, the supreme mystery of progressive creation, remains wholly inscrutable. We have no faculty enabling us intelligently to apprehend the creative potency through which nature is existing and undergoing its toilsome transmutations. And it is through activity of this same inscrutable potency that the progressive increments of mental, and therewith of social and ethical development, are structurally realized. Higher and higher efficiencies are thus creatively superadded to what perceptually appears to us as nothing but more and more complex molecular combinations of certain chemical elements.

From its structural matrix our consciousness emerges full-fashioned, a microcosmic revelation in which the gathered experience of our race and of our own inner life, together with the time- and space-scattered influences of the great outside world, have become symbolically harmonized into simultaneous presence.

In this all-revealing focus of conscious awareness, in which inner and outer experience concordantly, significantly, creatively blend, there opens a glorious vista into a world of ideal aspirations, wherein those premonitions arise that betoken, as yet unfulfilled ideal, a state of social and ethical perfection we most devoutly long to see realized in actual life.

Let us then circumspectly, rationally, beware that these ideal premonitions are truly reflecting the glory of a higher

state, so as to merit the creative sanction of progressive organic realization ; a sanction without which ideal thought of whatever kind vanishes as idle dream into traceless vacancy.

EDMUND MONTGOMERY.

HEMPSTEAD, TEXAS.

SOME OF THE LEADING IDEAS OF COMTE'S POSITIVISM.*

I. IF we try to form the idea of a divine Society or community of men—and by a divine Society I mean one that is perfect—we may, without incurring the reproach of manufacturing a Utopia, say this much of it. It must have a perfect Harmony or unity of all its members, and a perfect variety ; and the more intense and thorough the harmony is, the more so must the variety be. A perfect Society would have an intense oneness, but this oneness would hold amid an infinite variety of character and experience on the part of its individual members. In musical art, when instruments of many kinds sound different notes, we may have a symphony which is one of the most magnificent expressions of superpersonal feeling that humanity knows : such would be the harmony of a perfect Society, and such is the dream of the world.

Looking round on the world as it is, what do we seem to see? We seem to see only a chaos of conflicting elements,—individual men and classes of men. Our communities are battle-grounds ; interests and experiences clash together ; each one seems able to benefit itself only at the expense of others. Popular agitators industriously instil this idea into the public mind, and a multitude of causes, practical and theoretical, work together to make it survive. Hence we find that the problem of determining the right course in legislation and social action is continually being made to take this form : to balance against one another certain interests which are

* Lecture delivered before the London Ethical Society.